



LEWESTON

SHERBORNE

BURSARY POLICY

1. General

- 1.1 In line with the School's Charter and the objectives of the Charity, The Governors of Leweston School are committed to offering to eligible parents/guardians means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees to enable a pupil to attend Leweston School who otherwise would not be able to do so. Such support is known as a bursary and may be awarded in the form of a remission depending on the financial, compassionate or other pertinent circumstances of applicants.
- 1.2 Bursaries are awarded at the discretion of the Board of Governors. The Bursary Committee is responsible for the management and co-ordination of the process.
- 1.3 Information provided by the School alerting the parents/guardians of potential pupils to the possibility of gaining means-tested financial support with the payment of school fees is included in:
 - The School prospectus.
 - The School website.

2. Categories for Financial Support

- 2.1 Requests for financial support usually fall into three categories:
 - Applicants who have won a scholarship or other merit award but who require further financial assistance with termly fees in order to take up their place at Leweston ('Award Holder Bursaries');
 - Existing pupils where a change in parents/guardians' circumstances has resulted in difficulty in meeting termly fees and may result in the pupil being withdrawn part way through a key stage of their education ('Hardship Bursaries').
 - Other applicants who have not won a scholarship or other award whose parents are unable to meet the full fee ('Open Bursaries').
- 2.2 The bursary resources available to the School are determined annually by the Board of Governors. The total level of bursaries is therefore fixed and finite.
- 2.3 Award Holder Bursaries are awarded in accordance with the order in which awards are made, the top award holders being allocated funds first. Therefore, depending on the requirement for assistance in any one year, it is not always possible to award a bursary to all award holders even if their family's financial circumstances justify it. Scholarship candidates who believe

that additional financial support may be required must submit their Bursary Application Forms prior to our alongside their scholarship application.

- 2.4 Pupils who do not receive a bursary at entry are eligible to be considered for a bursary in the event that their family financial circumstances change whilst they are at the School. The application process and factors for consideration will be the same as those for new entrants but in addition a pupil's progress, attitude and behaviour at the School will be taken into account. Hardship awards for existing pupils will receive priority in the allocation of bursaries.
- 2.5 Open bursaries will be considered after bursaries have been allocated to the previous categories.
- 2.6 The School will only be able to provide bursaries to a proportion of applicants before its funds have run out. Those judged likely to gain most from the School's educational provision will be given priority. Each pupil to whom support is offered must, in the opinion of the Head, be likely to make sound academic progress following admission and possess the potential to develop the quality of her/his work. They will be expected to benefit other pupils through their participation in the wider, extra-curricular activities on offer at the School. Previous school reports will be consulted for evidence of good behaviour. Any pupil in receipt of a bursary will be expected to abide by all the School's policies and to meet its academic expectations.

3. Decision Making

- 3.1 Bursaries are decided by the Bursaries Committee. Bursary awards are made on the basis of a confidential assessment of a family's financial circumstances including their savings, investments and realisable assets, as well as their income, the size of their family, any other persons dependent upon them and other similar factors. Awards are typically between 10-20% of the current day fees but can rise to as much as 40% in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2 Applicants may receive a home visit by either a representative of the School or an outside agency to help assess appropriate levels of support.
- 3.3 The assessment determines the appropriate level of parental contribution in relation to their resources and thus the level of the award that will be offered. The level of the award may also be influenced by compassionate or other relevant circumstances.

4. Criteria for Assessment

- 4.1 The School will consider a number of factors when making the judgement as to the justification for support, and the extent of that support.
- 4.2 Each case is assessed on its own merits and awards are made accordingly. It is recognised that judgements about what sacrifices a family should make to pay school fees will be personal. However, the School has a duty to ensure that all bursaries are well focussed and so, as well as current earnings, other factors which will be considered in determining the necessary level of grant will include:
 - the ability to improve the financial position or earning power of the family. For example, where there are two partners, both would be expected to be employed unless one is

prevented from doing so through incapacity, the need to care for children under school age or other dependents, or the requirements of their partner's work;

- opportunities to release any capital. Significant capital savings and investments would be expected to be used for the payment of school fees, as would surplus equity values in houses;
- Joint income level is less than £70,000 pa (gross);
- In cases of separation, the contribution made by the absent parent;
- contribution to household costs by other, wider, family members, any adults unrelated to the child or by outside sources;
- payment of fees to other schools including any additional financial support. The School expects parents to share bursarial support equitably between schools. The School's assessment will take into account all these outgoings;
- acknowledging that others might have a different view, the School considers that the following would not be consistent with the receipt of a bursary:
 - Frequent or expensive holidays;
 - Expensive or luxury cars;
 - Investment in significant home improvements;
 - A second property/land holdings.

4.3 It is recognised that, in addition to academic ability and financial constraints, there may be other circumstances which should be considered. These include:

- Where a child has siblings at the School.
- Where the social needs of the child are relevant.
- Where a parent/guardian is terminally ill or is unable to secure permanent employment due to poor health.

5. Annual Review

5.1 All bursary awards are subject to repeat testing of parental means each year and may be varied upwards or downwards depending on parental circumstances. Parents of bursary holders will be required to complete Means Test forms to reflect their financial circumstances each spring. For those previously in receipt of bursaries, the Bursary Committee have the discretion to reduce or withdraw an award not only where a pupil's progress, attitude or behaviour has been unsatisfactory. This applies also where the parents/guardians have failed to support the School, for example by failure to pay fees by the due date.

6. Bursary Application Process

6.1 All applicants must be registered with the School before a bursary application is made.

6.2 Parents who are likely to require assistance with the payment of school fees should obtain a Bursary Administration Means Test Form from the Bursar's Secretary. These should be completed and returned to the Bursary in advance of the next Bursary Committee meeting. It is advised that forms are submitted well in advance of these times so that any incomplete information can be supplied before the deadline for application. Applications that are not complete at this time will not be considered.

Bursary Committee meetings will take place on: Wednesday 14 November 2018, Friday 11 January 2019 and Friday 15 March 2019.

- 6.3 Bursary assessment, which may include a home visit by either School staff or an external auditor, takes place after the Application Form has been received.
- 6.4 The Bursar will prepare a recommendation based on the family financial circumstances which is considered with the Bursary Committee and a recommendation is reached. Parents/guardians will be advised by the Bursar of the outcome of their application.
- 6.5 Parents/guardians of pupils who are awarded bursaries are required to sign a letter accepting the place at the school and an acknowledgement agreeing to any conditions relating to the bursary.

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1 The School respects the confidentiality of bursary awards made to families and recipients are expected to do likewise. The School reserves the right to withdraw the bursary should this clause be breached.

8. Other Sources of Bursary Assistance

- 8.1 In addition to the School's bursary fund, there are a number of educational and charitable trusts which provide assistance with tuition fees. In the majority of cases, these are to assist children who are already attending a fee-paying school and due to a change of circumstances may be unable to remain. Leweston School encourages parents/guardians to apply for support where it is felt a good case can be made for assistance. Further information on how to pursue such assistance may be obtained from the Bursar or from the Independent Schools Educational Grants Advice helpline 01932 865619.

Bursar

March 2018